



Bristol Bay Native Corporation

Enriching Our Native Way of Life

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September 28, 2011

Senator Lisa Murkowski
510 L Street, Suite 600
Anchorage, AK 99501

Senator Murkowski,

We appreciate your recent public statements supporting Bristol Bay, Alaska subsistence practices and commercial fishing. Bristol Bay Native Corporation shares these values and hopes it can continue to work with you to protect this vitally important region, the culture of its long-time inhabitants, and its sustainable fishing industry.

BBNC's mission "Enriching our Native way of life" shapes the corporation's commitment to responsible resource development. This means development that provides jobs and income for our shareholders but does not threaten the historical, cultural and economic lifeblood of the Bristol Bay region – salmon. Unfortunately, Pebble Mine fails this test. In any configuration, the mine is too big and will be located in too important of a location. It poses unacceptable risks to the salmon resource and, consequently, the subsistence lifestyle and economic interests of our shareholders. For these reasons, BBNC's shareholders and other residents and stakeholders of the Bristol Bay region overwhelmingly oppose the mine. It is why BBNC also opposes the mine. Nevertheless, we want to be clear, the risks posed by Pebble Mine are unique. BBNC does not otherwise oppose mining development. Pebble Mine is simply different.

BBNC urges you to keep an open mind on the EPA's Bristol Bay watershed assessment. Should the watershed assessment conclude that the aquatic and fishery resources of the Bristol Bay region would be unacceptably threatened by a mine of Pebble's configuration, size and location, then it makes eminent sense to allow EPA to exercise its 404(c) authority in a narrowly tailored and preemptive manner. Pre-emptive, targeted restrictions can provide early certainty as to appropriate dredge and fill activities in specific important and sensitive wetlands. Such certainty facilitates planning and provides valuable clarity to residents and developers before what would otherwise be time and money-intensive permitting processes that science and law tell us could only culminate in one result: permit denial.

To be clear, BBNC is neither asking nor expecting EPA to overreach or to impose broad impediments to other mining projects in Alaska. To the contrary, BBNC is asking the agency to make one specific finding – that Pebble Mine poses too great a risk to the Bristol Bay region, our people and our way of life. Given BBNC's mission, this is a responsible position that is also fully consistent with your own stated views on Bristol Bay, subsistence and commercial fishing.

Thank you again for your understanding and support of the relationship between Bristol Bay area fish, the subsistence and culture of our shareholders and other Bristol Bay residents and our sustainable fishing economy. We hope you now also have a better understanding of and appreciation for BBNC's position on Pebble Mine.

Regards,

Jason Metrokin
President & Chief Executive Officer